

A Tip Sheet for Garage Band '09 (v. 5.1)



Garage Band was, I think, designed to enable users to create their own music. You may find good ways to use this capability in a classroom. In this case, though, we are going to be using Garage Band as an easy way to create podcast-like files. That is, short (or not so short) multimedia files that combine narration, music, sound effects and pictures. These files may be played in iTunes, on iPods or similar music players, or without such devices, simply as audio and movie files on a computer. These files may also be embedded in Word, PowerPoint, etc.

Start Garage Band (Go to the Applications Folder and double click on the Garage Band icon.) and, when presented with the opening set of options, select “Podcast.” You will need to specify a location where the file will be saved and a name for the file. (Don’t worry about the “Tempo,” “Signature,” etc.) and click on “Create.” I recommend that you save it on the desktop or in the Documents folder. You will be presented with the Garage Band screen where you can put together voice tracks (narration), graphics, music, and sound effects.

Voice (Narration) Tracks: Click on one of the grey bars, either “Male Voice” or “Female Voice” in the upper-left quadrant of the screen. This will highlight that track, making it ready to record your voice using the microphone that is built into the computer. Now when you click on the Record button, your voice will be recorded. You can stop the recording by hitting the Space bar. You can record another voice track by clicking on the other voice bar (either “Male Voice” or “Female Voice”). You can move the tracks back and forth in the sequence by clicking and dragging them.



Graphics: You can add graphics (photos) by saving them and then dragging them onto the “Podcast Track,” or by accessing the “Media Browser” (right) and clicking the “Photos” tab. When you see the photo you like, click and drag it to the Podcast Track. Its duration in the podcast will be determined by default but you can change that by dragging the lower-right end of the photo bar back or forth. **NOTE:** you can make PowerPoint slides, save them as “pictures,” and use these.



Music: You can add music through iTunes via the Media Browser, as above, or you can click on the “Loop Browser” to select “Jingles,” “Stingers,” or “Sound Effects.” These can be tested with a single click and then dragged into the podcast and positioned as you did with graphics. You can adjust the volume level on any audio track by clicking on the triangle that sits at the right end of the row of icons in a track’s left hand bar (huh?)



Save Early, Save Often!

Check it out: You can check to see how your podcast looks and sounds at any time by clicking on the “Podcast Preview” window in the Podcast Track” bar and then clicking Play.

Save / Export your Podcast: Check the “Share” menu at the top of the page for some options. One of the simplest is to “Export Podcast to Disk...” If you have used graphics, choose ACC encoding. This will result in an “.m4a” file that can be inserted into a PowerPoint, Word document (etc) or as a file linked to a Web page.

For a video tutorial, go here: <http://www.apple.com/ilife/tutorials/> Click on the Garage Band icon. At the bottom of the list that appears, you will see the item, “Creating a Podcast.” Click on that.